AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE OF TEXAS

EXTENSION SERVICE

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE
AND HOME ECONOMICS

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POULTRY HOUSES

For Texas

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POULTRY HOUSES FOR TEXAS

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Poultry houses should be dry, well ventilated, free from drafts and have plenty of sunshine, also floor space to permit the birds freedom and comfort. These are essentials, in any type of house, and should not be overlooked, if maximum production is to be expected. Poultry houses are built in various shapes and sizes. Frequently old buildings can be remodeled into real serviceable poultry houses.

LOCATION

The location is important and should be given careful consideration. It might be advisable in remodeling old sheds, etc., to move them to a better location. The house should be located on well-drained ground. Houses located in poorly drained places make cold damp quarters and this in the end will bring sickness and disease. Face the house to the South or Southeast, as this will permit a greater amount of sunlight throughout the day especially during the winter when it is most needed. This exposure makes the house drier, warmer, and more conducive to the productiveness of the flock.

FLOOR SPACE.

Floor space is important. The number of square feet allowed per bird will depend on the conditions under which they are kept. If birds are kept in close confinement, 3 to 4 square feet of floor space should be provided for each bird. Under average farm conditions where the birds are allowed free range, 2½ to 3 square feet should be allowed each bird.

FLOORS

Poultry houses can be built with or without floors, the main essential being dryness of floor regardless of the kind. If dirt floors are used it will be necessary to scrape out the houses once a year and add fresh gravel or dirt to keep them clean and sanitary. If wood floors are constructed they should be built 8 to 10 inches above the ground to allow ventilation and to prevent rats from harboring under them.

Concrete floors are more durable and are satisfactory. They keep out the rats and last much longer. They are sanitary and easy to clean. The cost of construction should be kept in mind, however. A concrete floor should never be used unless it is kept well covered with litter; otherwise it will be cold.

ROOSTS.

Always place the roosts in the back of the house away from the opening. A dropping board to catch the droppings should be built about 8 inches below the roosts and not over 3 feet above the floor. The roosts should be about 15 inches apart ,running either lengthwise or across the dropping board. Dropping board should not extend forward in the building any further than is necessary. From 8 to 10 inches of roosting space should be allowed for each bird.

NESTS.

There should be one nest for every four hens. The nests should not be less than 12 to 15 inches and can be placed on the end walls or partitions or under the dropping board.

THE SEMI-MONITOR HOUSE.

Figure 1 shows the floor plan of a semi-monitor house for two hundred hens. This is a very desirable type of house for the reason that it permits sunlight to enter the back part of the house through the high windows, and also has the open front protected from the rain by low projecting eaves. Another good feature is that the roosts are a considerable distance from the open front.

Figure 2 shows the north elevation of this house with ventilating doors for use in summer.

Figure 3 shows the south side of the house with the high windows, and the open front under the low eaves.

Figure 4 shows a section of the semi-monitor house. It is shown with a dirt floor but it may have any other kind desired. The roosts are hinged at the rear and may be lifted for cleaning off the dropping board. The nests are placed under the edge of the dropping board and are built so that the hens enter them from the rear. The eggs may be gathered by opening a door at the front side of the nests.

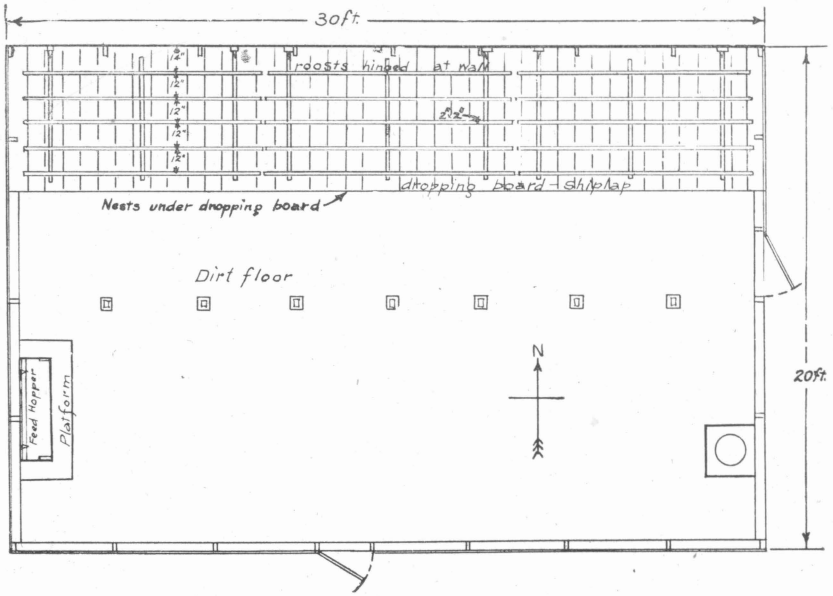

Fig. 1 Floor plan of semi-monitor house for 200 hens

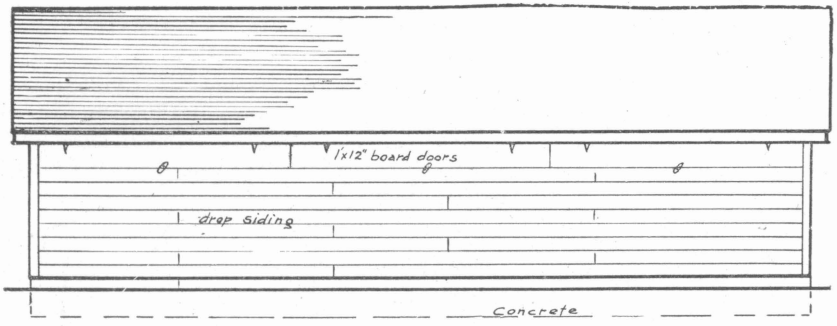

Fig. 2, North elevation of semi-monitor house.

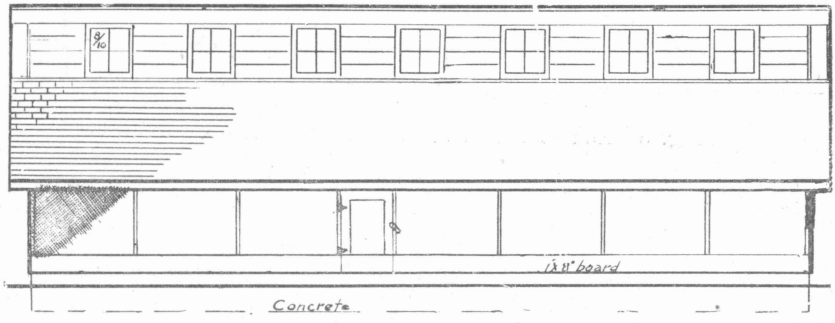

Fig. 3. South elevation of semi-monitor house.

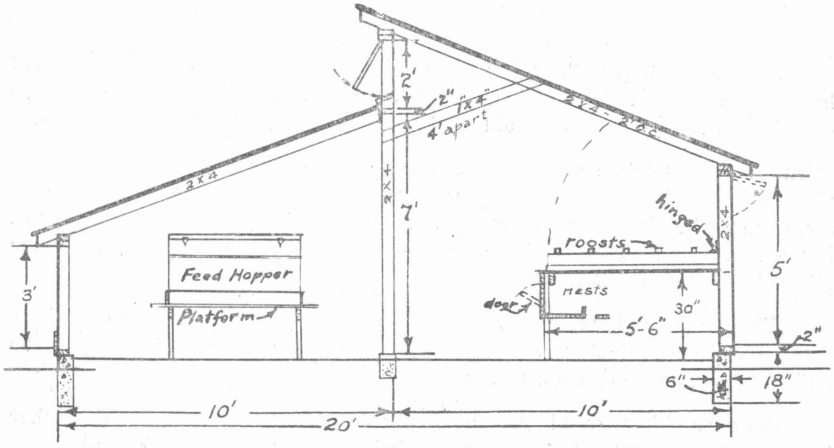

Fig. 4. Section of semi-monitor house.

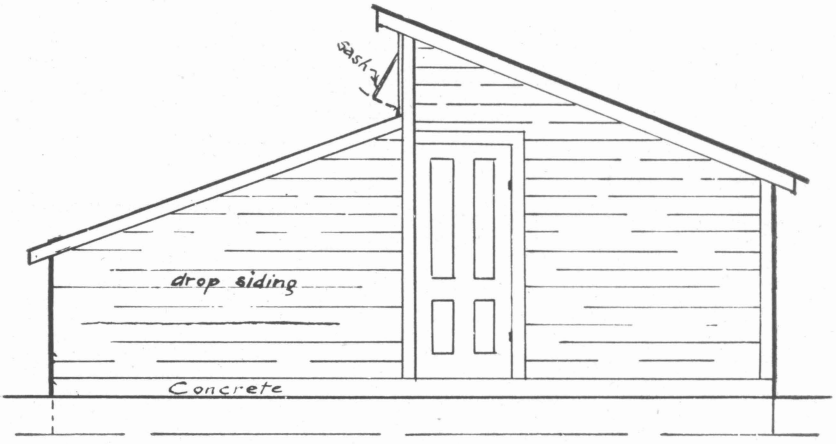

Fig. 5 End elevation of semi-monitor house.

Figures 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 show views of a gable roof house for 250 hens. The plan for ventilating and admitting light to this house may be used in the remodeling of an old gable roof building into a poultry house.

The ceiling joists serve to strengthen the roof and also to support a slatted floor. This floor is recommended as a support for a thick layer of straw to make the house warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. Some poultrymen prefer to use the slats without straw, since the straw might harbor vermin.

Where a large house is desired this type will probably be found to be a little more economical in material than most others. This house may be built 30 feet square or even larger.

The open side of this house should face the south the same as with other types. The windows at the sides and back eliminate any dark corners.

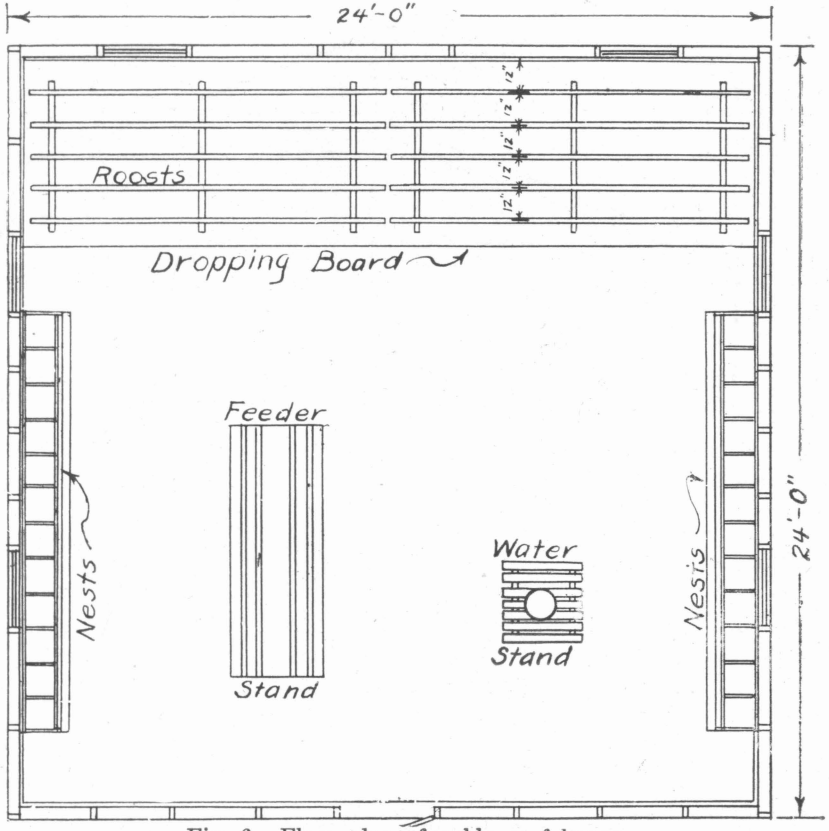

Fig. 6. Floor plan of gable roof house.

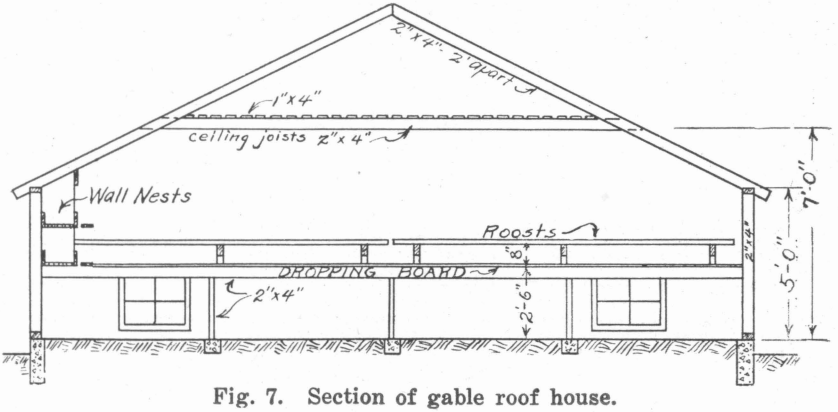

Fig. 7. Section of gable roof house.

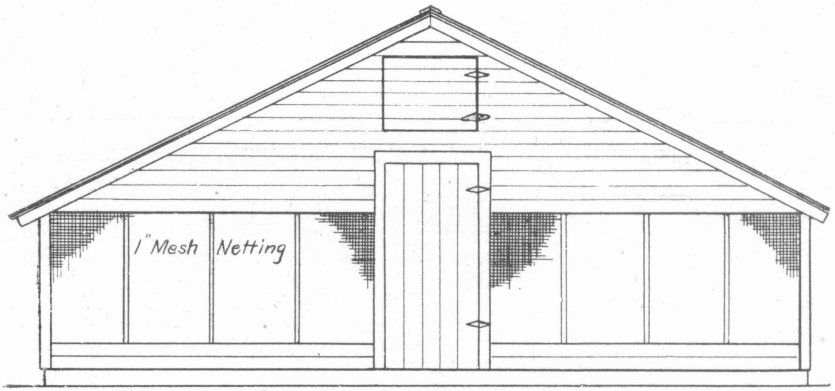

Fig. 8. South elevation of gable roof house.

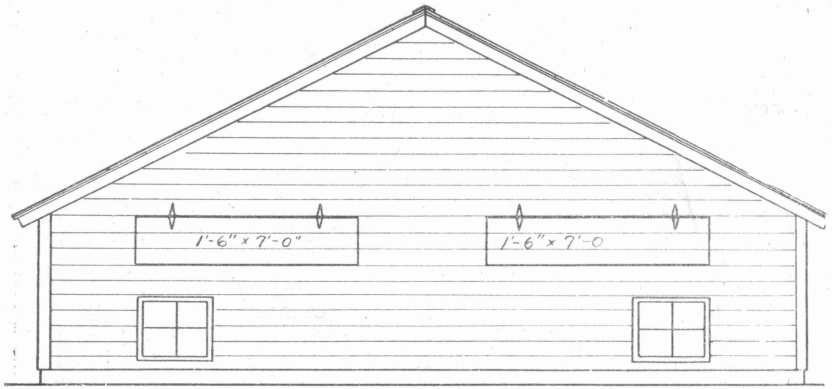

Fig. 9. North elevation of gable roof house.

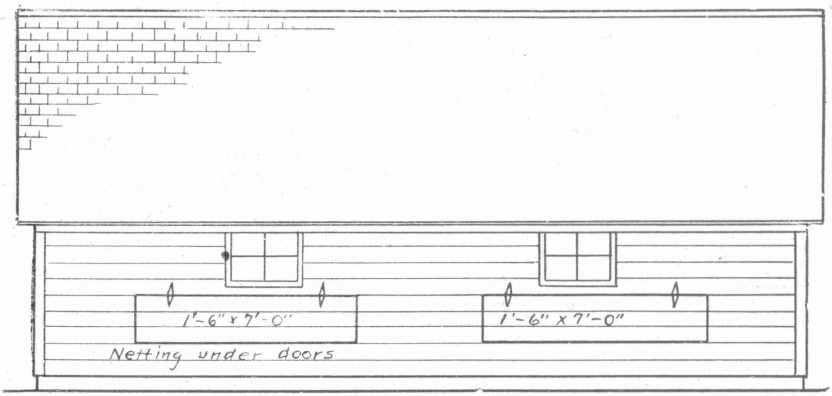

Fig. 10. Side elevation of gable roof house.

SHED ROOF HOUSE WITH HOOD OVER OPEN END.

Fig. 11 shows the floor plan of another shed roof house. Wall nests are shown in this plan. In the end view, fig. 12, is shown large ventilating doors which may be fastened up in summer. The short shed roof over the open front is also shown in this view. This shed is for the purpose of keeping rain from blowing into the house.

Figure 15 is a detail section of the dark wall nests shown in this house The nests are placed in a double tier with the entrance from the rear. The hens enter the small alley next to the house wall from the end of a row of nests and not through the outside ventilating door shown slightly raised.

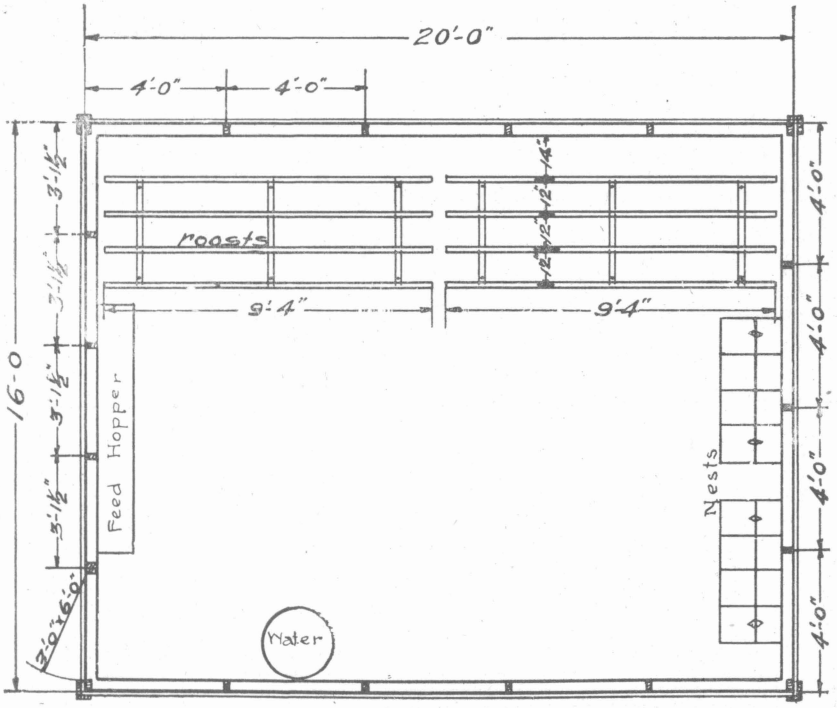

Fig. 11. Floor plan of shed roof open front house for 100 hens.

Same plan can be used for 75 hens by cutting size to 16 X 16.

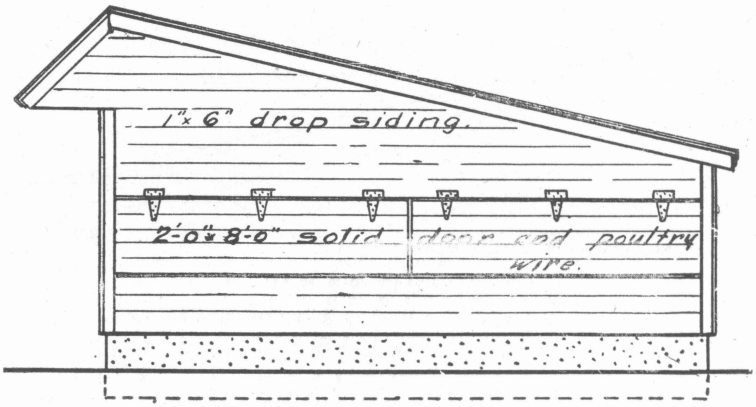

Fig. 12. End elevation of shed roof open front house.

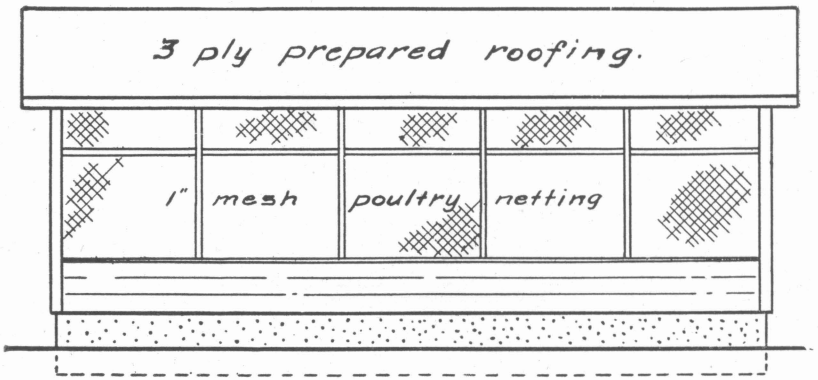

Fig. 13. South elevation of shed roof open front house.

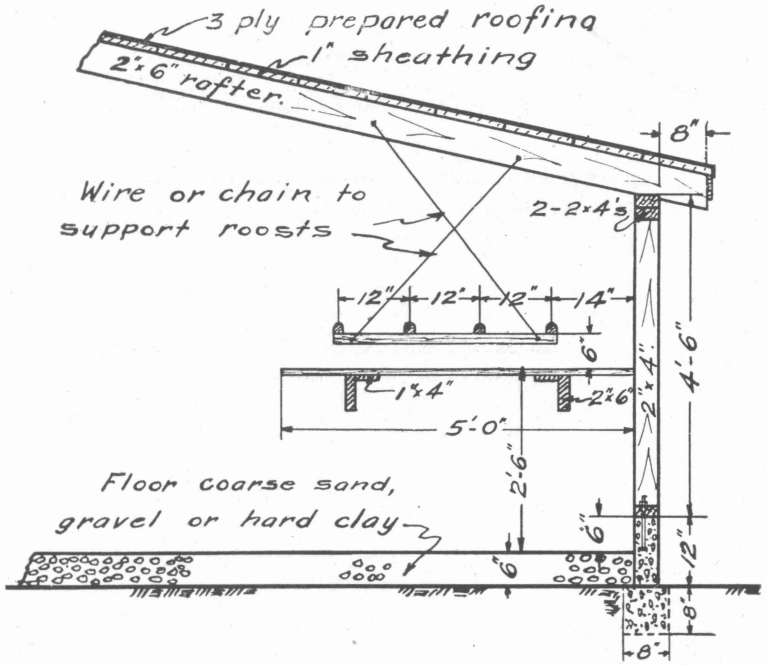

Fig. 14. Detail of roosts suspended by wires and removable dropping board.

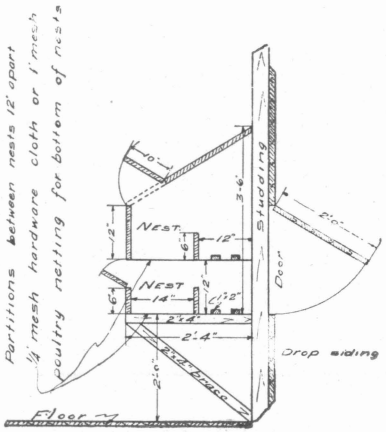

Fig. 15. Section of dark wall nests.

SMALL 25 HEN HOUSE

Figures 16, 17, 18, and 19, show different views of the small house used at College Station in the Texas National Egg Laying Contest. It is suitable for a small flock of laying hens, and also may be used as a brooder house. This house is built on skids so it may be moved about.

Figures 20, 21, 22, and 23, show a small house with the same floor plan as shown in figure 16 but with more ventilation than is used in the other house. The entire front of this house is open, and large ventilating doors are placed in the other three sides. A short shed roof over the front keeps the rain from blowing into the house.

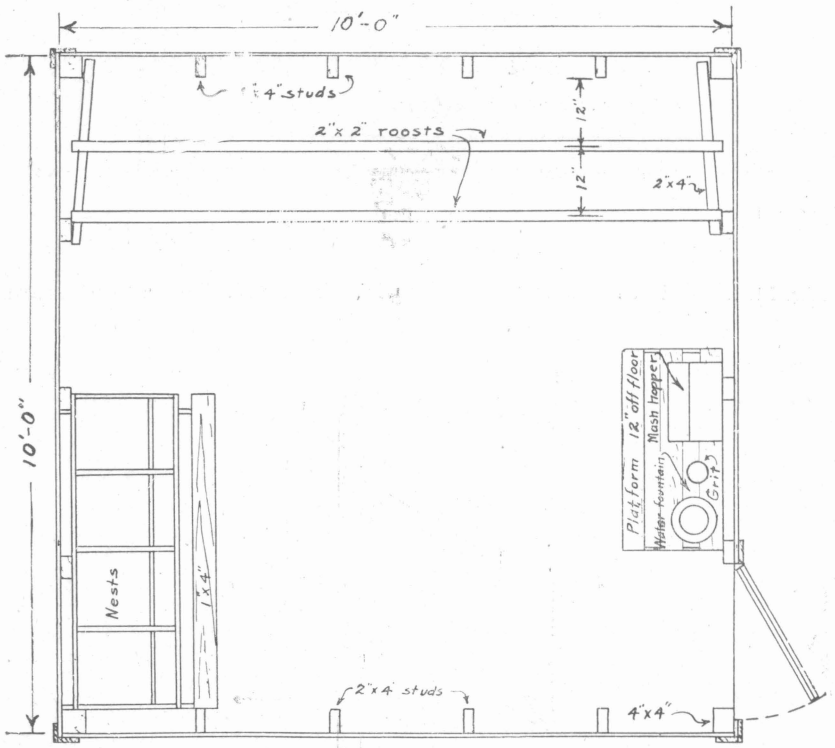

Fig. 16. Floor plan of house for 25 hens.

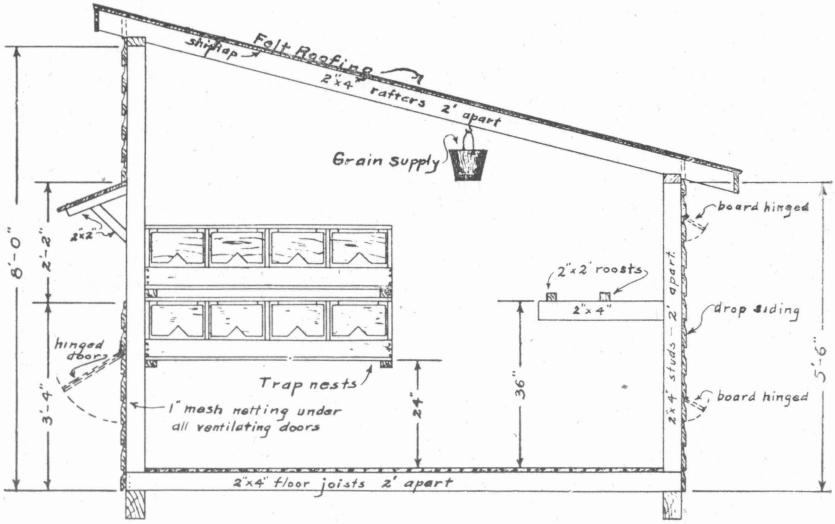

Fig. 17. Section of house for 25 hens.

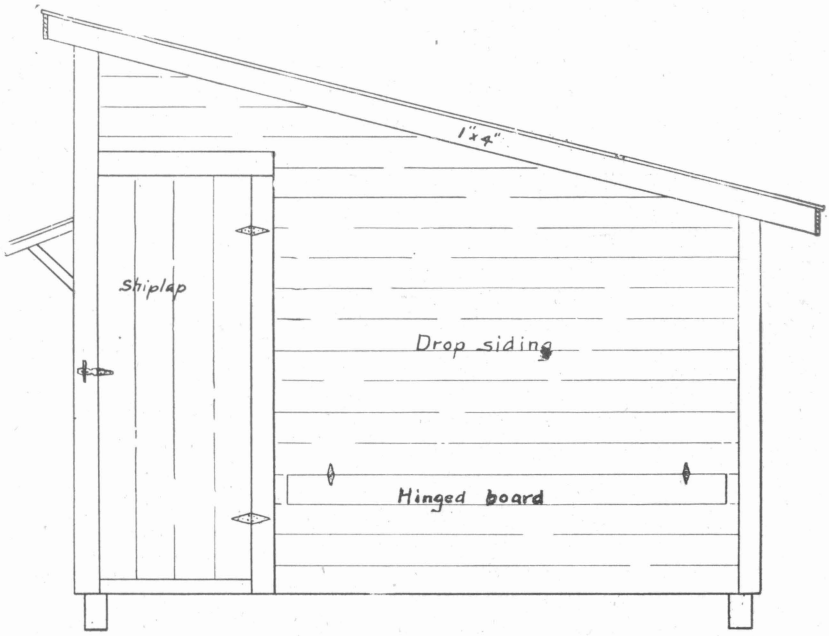

Fig. 18. End elevation of house for 25 hens.

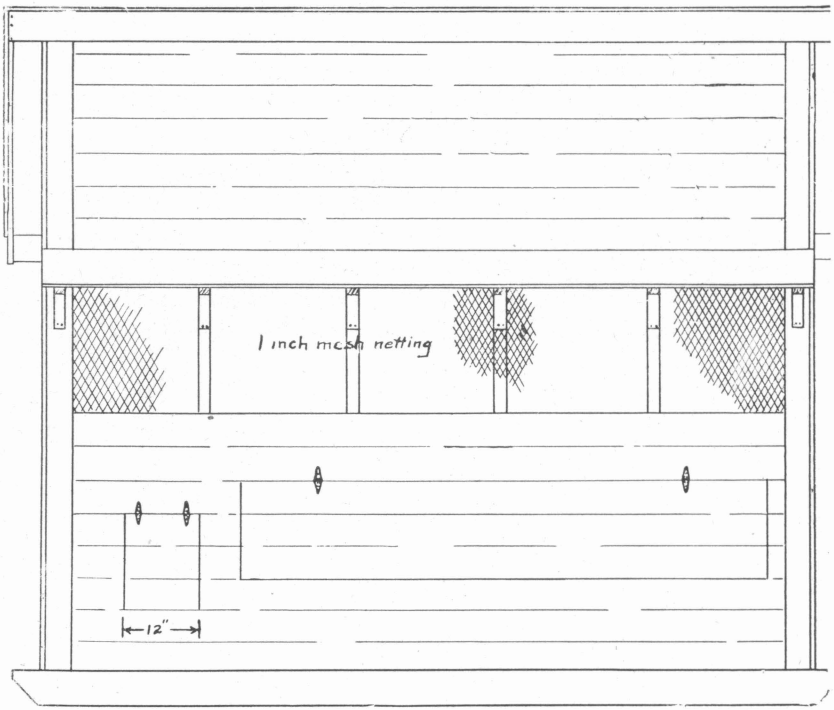

Fig. 19. South elevation of house for 25 hens.

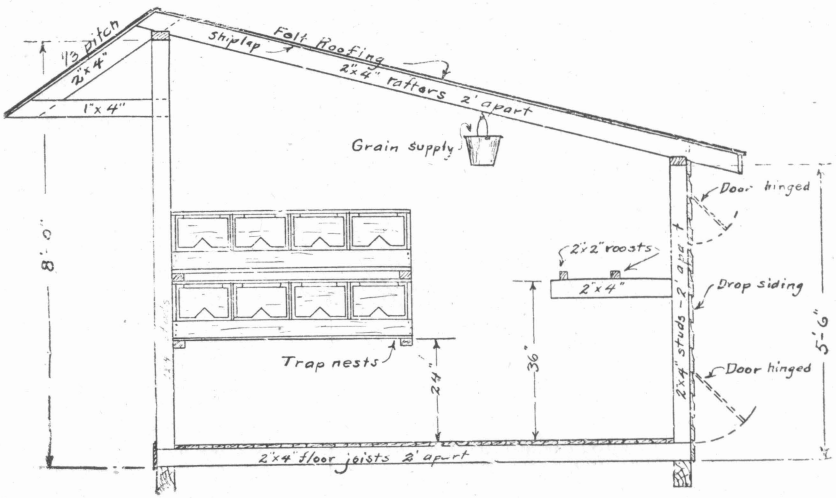

Fig. 20. Section of 25 hen house.